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"A bright anthology of jokes and anecdotes... Myron Cohen knows his humor."  
—Abel Green, Variety.

## A Life In Ferment

MINE ENEMY GROWS OLDER. By Alexander King. 374 pp. New York: Simon and Schuster. \$4.50.

By RAYMOND HOLDEN

FEW ordinary writers could or would attempt to write a life of Alexander King. While they wrote about him, he would no doubt confound them by becoming someone else. It is by no means certain that the man who finally did get around to writing about him isn't subject to the same difficulty. That man is Alexander King himself—or is he? Perhaps he doesn't, and never did, exist at all. It says in this book that some years ago a New York columnist declared that Alexander King was the invention of a couple of Hungarian journalists.

If so, those journalists were men of immense and macabre imagination. For Alexander King, as he describes himself, is really something. He is a sick man whose days, since his inventors didn't provide him with adequate kidneys, are numbered. He is, or was, a drug addict possessed of unusual gusto and a talent for sounding the lowest depths. He is an artist, with both a capital and a small "A." He has decorated department store windows and done illustrations for more than sixty books. He once invented a syndicate of seven or eight artists to do a series of leaflets for an advertising agency. He played the parts of every one of these artists himself. Their work was so successful that the agency put King on the spot by giving a terrific cocktail party and inviting all eight to attend.

WHEN he wasn't being an artist, he was an editor. He got around. He seems to have met everybody from William Seabrook to Henry Luce and to have formed very strong opinions, some favorable but mostly unfavorable, about all of his acquaintances. Some of them are not going to be very happy about their part in this book. The reader who has a strong stomach and is not irritated by the author's verbal juggling and sometimes painful name-calling will be made either happy or morbidly excited. Others probably won't read his book. This may be a pity, since there are sandwiched in between its horrors some anecdotes and personal narratives of rare subtlety and humor. Whether one regards this as autobiography or fiction (the two are not really so far apart), it is at once a story of degradation and depravity and a sensitive and often kindly commentary on human life.

Mr. Holden, a poet, author and critic, has a close acquaintance with the literary world.

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by Boris Pasternak

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open. There are 7 players



◀ ONE  
BIG PAIR

▶ FOUR CARD  
FLUSH



◀ THREE OF  
A KIND

The illustrations are from the SAT-  
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Photograph by OLLIE ATKINS

### About HERBERT O. YARDLEY

Yardley's mastery of the infinite subtleties of poker made him just the kind of agile thinker whom you would expect to crack a wartime Japanese code (he did) and to write the classic book on codes, ciphers and spies (he did: *The American Black Chamber*).

"Because he plays such a tight game of poker," says *The Saturday Evening Post*, "Yardley has been dubbed 'Old Adhesive' by his friends. After his retirement (as a cryptanalyst) three years ago, Yardley made a scientific study of poker in all its variations, thus reinforcing his fifty years of experience as a player. Now he has told all in *THE EDUCATION OF A POKER PLAYER*."

**Here's how good it is  
(the first tribute to Yardley's book)**

*The New York Herald Tribune Book Review* says, "It should be part of every father's investment portfolio for his son — or for himself. What Goren and Vanderbilt have done for the bridge player, Yardley has now done for that submerged four-fifths of American manhood that plays poker. He has given us dignity, wisdom and philosophy."

— THEODORE H. WHITE.



### THIS IS HOW YARDLEY WOULD PLAY THE HANDS IN PANEL ABOVE

**One Big Pair:** Yardley says, "Never stay on less. If you are sitting to the left of the opener, raise on a pair of Kings or Aces. If you drive out other players and the opener draws three cards, draw three with him. If he draws two cards, or one, draw two. If he checks, bet regardless of your hand. If an occasional player stays after you have raised, draw two and bet, unless someone stands pat."

**Four-Card Flush:** Yardley says, "A four-card flush should never be played unless there is over five times as much in the pot as the bet itself. That goes, too, for a four-card straight, open at both ends. As for an inside straight, why draw to it? The odds are twelve-to-one you don't make it."

**Three-of-a-Kind:** "My rule is this," says Yardley. "If you're holding three-of-a-kind, Tens or better, don't raise. You want to entice as many others to stay as you can, because you're pretty sure of winning. However, if your three are Nines or worse, raise. You want to drive out players who might draw against you."

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